



County of Placer

Fish and Game Commission

11477 E Avenue ▪ Auburn, CA 95603 ▪ (530) 889-7372

District 1 – Don Gould

District 2 – Mark Fowler

District 3 – Jim Victorine

District 4 – Gary Flanagan

District 5 – Kari Freidig

District 5 – Mickey Daniels

District 5 – Scott Husmann

MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, March 28, 2018, 6:00 P.M.

Placer County Planning Commission Hearing Room

3091 County Center Drive, Auburn, CA

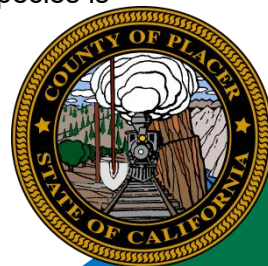
County Contact: Ed King

1. **Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order by Chair Mark Fowler at 6:02 pm.
2. **Roll Call** – Present: Don Gould, Mark Fowler, Jim Victorine, Kari Freidig, Mickey Daniels and Gary Flanagan. Absent: Scott Husmann.
3. **Approval of March 28, 2018 Agenda** moved by Gould, seconded by Daniels, MPUV. **Approval of February 28, 2018 Minutes** moved by Daniels, seconded by Flanagan, MPUV.
4. **Public Comment:** Individuals may address the Commission on items under the jurisdiction of the Fish and Game Commission not included on this agenda for no longer than five (5) minutes. **No action can be taken on items addressed under Public Comment.** There was no public comment.
5. **Financial Report**
Operational expenditures through February totaled \$3,059.
Court fines and penalty assessments through February totaled \$295.
6. **Agency Reports**
 - A. **Commissioner Reports**
Gary reported on the Big Game Advisory Committee: applications begin accepted for grants up to \$10M to provide habitat restoration for big game.

State Fish & Game Commission Subcommittee: Mark Fowler reported that the Nimbus basin is closed permanently to fishing now – as of March 1, 2018 – to re-orient the fish ladder and move the weir.

A Sierra Nevada Red Fox was captured in Tehama County just outside of Lassen Park; the CDFW has listed the fox as threatened since 1980.

CDFW is inviting artists to enter the annual California Duck Stamp Art Contest. Entries will be accepted from May 11 thru June 11, 2018. This year's species is the Brant.



Anglers have been urged to return their overdue 2017 Sturgeon Fishing Report Cards; so far only 31% have been turned in, they are due April 1st.

April Recreational Ocean Salmon Fishery is curtailed on much of the California Coast; it opens April 7th from Pigeon Point south to US/Mexican border, all other areas are closed for April due to California drought and poor ocean conditions.

The Wildlife Conservation Board funds stream flow enhancement projects. At the March 22nd meeting they approved \$33.1M in grants for 22 projects. The most local one is a \$609,970 grant to UC Regents for a cooperative project with the Univ. of Nevada, Reno to expand scientific studies and modeling in the Tahoe-Truckee Basin. This project is located in the Lake Tahoe basin and the Tahoe National Forest.

The 2018 Invasive Species Youth Art Contest is starting. The deadline is May 4th; the theme is "Pledge to not Spread". There are different divisions for youth ages 2-12.

Kari mentioned that her wildlife group is raising 10 fox kits and will have them tested to see if they are the Sierra Nevada Red Fox.

B. Land Use Subcommittee: Don Gould – No report

C. Department of Fish & Wildlife: Lt. Brian Moore reported that they have filled the Lincoln and Auburn warden positions with very qualified candidates. He has been busy with a couple of calls per week regarding bears, especially in the Tahoe region where they have been hitting the dumpsters.

Turkey season opens March 31st. There was a question as to if they will extend the season because of the plethora of turkeys, or allow more per shoot; he will pursue an answer to this.

Lt. Moore has not met with the DA yet to discuss the process of charging violators and the fines coming to the Commission.

D. Nevada Irrigation District and Placer County Water Agency

NID: Water supply update as of March 26, 2018: Storage = 248,800 AF; 136% of average; 92% of capacity. Precipitation = 58.40"; 99% of average. Will be doing snow surveys this week and expect quite an improvement from March 1 with the amount of precipitation and finally snow that was received in March. All reservoirs are full except the higher elevation ones (Jackson Meadows, Bowman and French) which should come close to filling with the expected snow melt runoff.

NID BOD has approved a contract for a contractor to begin CEQA for the Hemphill diversion replacement.

PCWA: Observations from recent March weather events:

- 9.3" of precipitation at Lake Spaulding
- 2.4 inch increase of SWE in the American River Basin (warm storms translate to more runoff than snow accumulation)
- 32,000 AF of runoff into French Meadows and Hell Hole
- 17% increase in MFP storage
- 43% increase of storage in Lake Spaulding and Fordyce
- 31% increase of storage in Folsom Lake (20.4' water surface increase)

7. Informational Items

Mitch Lockhart, District Fisheries Biologist, California Department of Fish & Wildlife – Update on 2018 Department of Fish & Wildlife stocking plans and other fisheries projects in Placer County.

Mitch reported that the rainbow trout production has increased with higher flows in the rivers. They have not seen a die-off in the American River Hatchery, but there are problems with other species such as Lahontan cutthroat trout (mainly because these are wild fish and do not behave like the rainbow trout that have been developed for these conditions). They have only 30% of the allotment of Lahontan cutthroat trout. They are looking for improved infrastructure to increase cold water storage with round tanks for better production.

The Independence and Pilot Peak strains of Lahontan cutthroat are from east of the Sierras and they are planted at Tahoe and Truckee basin areas. They have not tried to establish the sea-run cutthroat because these are not in the Placer County jurisdiction.

There is no update on suing the Bureau of Reclamation for the releases that affected the hatcheries at Folsom. Mitch will follow up on this.

The Kokanee program has problems with collecting eggs because of high water and weir placement. This has been a problem for the last 8 or 9 years. They usually go to Washington to buy eggs, but this year they had the same issue with high water and no eggs. Any production will probably go back into Stampede. There are Chinook problems also at the Feather River Hatchery and they cannot arrive at an allotment number right now.

Fish have been allotted for: Auburn Regional Park pond, and Meadow Vista Park pond.

Gary asked if there could be more allotments of trout in other local ponds – such as in Lincoln. Mitch will look into this and is fully supportive of the idea, as is his supervisor. He will do pre-stocking evaluations at the sites and going through the process to move forward for planning next year. Gary is interested in forming an advisory committee to look at increasing fishing opportunities in Western Placer County; this would include reporting to California Department of Fish and Wildlife and would look at sites such as Coyote Park pond off Twelve Bridges road.

Gary was also concerned that Folsom Lake is allotted 137,000 fish per year, but that they are only seeing 25,000 actual plants...and why are there more released at Brown's Ravine? Mitch indicated that it is an issue as to scheduling and convenience for getting the fish released, and that they do not plant the total allotment at one time. Gary was also concerned that the recording from the Department did not actually reflect the correct schedule of fish plantings, and that people are commenting on this. Mitch will review this situation.

Mark asked about expanding the fish hatchery facility to accommodate the cold water requirements and Mitch indicated that yes, they have begun to work on this and that step one is complete with more plans for continued expansion of the cold-water tanks. The Lahontan cutthroat grow very fast with the chillers, and then there is a problem to get them out to the streams/lakes in time. The hatcheries are more independent now after the realignment of the hatchery system; they do not ship fish throughout the State anymore. The improvements are designed to stabilize the system and help to have more consistent production. There is no plan to move the hatchery upstream on the American River, as of now.

Mitch also indicated that they are getting good fish population data from Lake Tahoe by partnering with Nevada Department of Wildlife and angling guides. The guides will now start to collect and report data from Donner, Boca and Prosser. Mitch would like to work with all guides in the area. He will be preparing reports on the fisheries in the back country area this summer and will have his reports available.

Chris McKibbin, District Fish Biologist, California Department of Fish & Wildlife
– Overview of the Department of Fish & Wildlife's Monitoring Programs

Chris reported on the monitoring in Auburn Ravine Creek for Steelhead and Chinook salmon (he has only been involved for the past 6 weeks). They use the data from Friends of Auburn Ravine and are excited about the video report produced, even though they lost one camera this year. The hatchery returns have been affected by drought and sub-optimal ocean conditions. There has been record Steelhead production on the Mokelumne.

There was a problem with the warm temperature of the rivers and releasing fish from the hatcheries. Shasta is trying to remedy this situation with better cold-water releases. It is important to get carcass samples to monitor the movement of the salmon, but it is hard with otters preying on the fish. Hatcheries mark 25% of the Chinook they release with a fin removal and a tag.

They are using ear-bone testing to tell where the fish originated – wild or hatchery, and which hatchery. Auburn Ravine fish will have a unique signature. The genetic testing is not as accurate as to the origination of the fish. Gary mentioned that Cramer genetics lab is currently testing the salmon from the Auburn Ravine study. Chris has a genetic archive from 2002 that is available.

8. Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm. Next meeting is April 25, 2018.